

Odds and Ends

The Whorl list — 3 messages, 2 voices, 26 Jan 2001

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1074>

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James Jordan — 26 Jan 2001, 15:09

Am re-reading OBW and IGJ in preparation for RTW (which just arrived). Noticed a couple of things that MAY have been discussed already -- I did review all the posts I've kept -- and thought I'd share them here.

1. At the end of OBW, Horn hears himself being called to the shore as Babbie. Someone already mentioned that Babbie is to Horn (semihuman to human) as Horn is the Caller (semidivine to divine). Horn goes and lays his own head on the lap of the Caller, as Babbie lay his head on the laps of Horn and Seawrack. Who is the Caller? Someone suggested the Outsider. Maybe, but explicitly he is a Vanished God, and this is said a couple pages later, when Horn tells Brother and Sister about the Vanished People and the Vanished God in their woods. I doubt if it's any more complicated than that.

2. Krait is like Sinew because Krait's mother drank from Sinew. Thus, the traits gained by the inhumani are specific to the persons they drink from, and are passed on. In Fava's second tale, she says that when she saw a man on Green, she thought that a human form was the best form one of her kind could take, indicating that her genetic history includes human blood/attributes. Remember that Wolfe is not a Darwinian, but a Lamarckian. Mom did not have to be gravid at the time she returned to Green. She just had to have drunk from baby Sinew before making the trip.

3. It's probably stupid of me to suggest this now, since it may be taken up in RTW, but I'm now betting that iron is part of the secret of the inhumani. Blood is iron-based, and the iron shackles on Jahlee seem to affect her. And it is in this context that Horn threatens her with the secret. In spite of all the ins and outs of the discussion of the Secret, in which I've added my own share of confusion, the Secret seems to be something simple and immediate, and iron might just be the answer.

4. On Horn's hatred of Sinew. I have not seen anyone suggest this, but I wonder if Horn has some reason to suspect that Sinew is not his child, but the child of an adultery of Nettle's? This would explain a lot, even if Horn were wrong in his suspicions. At any rate, it is only my own suspicion.

Patera Nutria

*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.

James Jordan — 27 Jan 2001, 13:04 · follows James Jordan

At 03:09 PM 1/26/2001 -0600, I wrote:

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secret. In spite of all the ins and outs of the discussion of the Secret, in which I've added my own share of confusion, the Secret seems to be something simple and immediate, and iron might just be the answer.

I'd meant to add: (a) the weapon provided Horn is a sword, not a sluggun or a needler. Is this because iron is effective against inhum, while the other kinds of weapons aren't? And (b) Horn does not want to use this secret, or give it out, because he does not want to destroy the inhum.

Nutria

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mark millman — 29 Jan 2001, 12:18 · follows James Jordan

Nutria,

I'm afraid I can't agree with your iron theory. Wasn't Quetzal killed by the wound from a slug gun? Furthermore, I believe (though I don't have my Long Sun books here for reference) that we've been told how needlers work, and it's implied that the needles must be ferromagnetic, if not actually ferrous (which would be the obvious assumption), as the needle guns rely on a principle similar to magnetic levitation to propel their needles (i.e., they're hand-held railguns). Although I assume that slugs are made of lead, I can't see why they couldn't be made of soft iron, other than the fact that it would be expensive and wasteful to do so compared to using lead.

Besides, to be frank, the sword Horn was given didn't strike me as being made of any conventional(ly human) material.

As far as your point (b), though, I'm in perfect agreement.

Nacre

At 01:04 PM 27-01-01 -0600, Nutria (James B. Jordan) wrote:

At 03:09 PM 1/26/2001 -0600, I wrote:

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